



*Supporting the economic, social and environmental
well-being of California's Central Valley*

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October 8, 2002

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Commission Secretary
445 12th Street SW
CY-B402
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Proceeding 02-306

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Great Valley Center supports the approval of SBC Pacific Bell's application to join California's long distance market. GVC believes that Pacific Bell will offer additional choice to California consumers, bring potential cost savings, new technology, and better service to the marketplace. Businesses as well as residents stand to benefit from increased competition in an open market. Providing opportunities for consumers to choose enhances the economic climate for everyone.

The mission of the Great Valley Center is to support activities and organizations that promote the economic, social and environmental well being of California's Central Valley. In the Central Valley technology is a vital and growing commodity that benefits the residents of our towns and cities. We support all policies that create better practices for businesses and consumers alike, and we believe that SBC's ability to offer long distance service will give the region more choices, better service, savings and convenience.

SBC Pacific Bell filed its long distance application more than four years ago. The CPUC has overseen an unprecedented series of filings, workshops, audits, re-filings, tests and hearings - all designed to ensure SBC Pacific Bell has complied with the 1996 Telecommunications Act's requirement to open the local market to competitors. It is disturbing that the long distance entry process for SBC Pacific Bell has taken such a long period of time.

The Great Valley Center has had a long-term relationship with SBC Pacific Bell and believes the company to be a solid corporate citizen making positive contributions to the state and our local economic efforts. The Great Valley Center believes that Pacific Bell's entry into the long distance market will favorably effect the residents of the Central Valley by providing them with greater consumer choice and a more competitive market.

M. Dortch
October 7, 2002
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SBC Pacific Bell's entry into the long distance market comes at a time when the nations telecommunications industry is in significant turmoil. Competition in the industry is now the norm, and it is necessary for regulators to apply fair and balanced rules to all providers in order to ensure that competition is based upon investments, technology, and sound business practices.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Whiteside". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Carol Whiteside
President

CW/rgt/hha